



Jennifer M. Granholm, Governor
Robert W. Swanson, Director

News Release

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City of Ionia Receives Cool Cities “Neighborhoods in Progress” Designation

October 12, 2006 – Robert W. Swanson, director of the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth (DLEG), recently announced that the City of Ionia has been selected as a Cool Cities “Neighborhoods in Progress” designee.

Upgrades of \$300,000 to Ionia’s Theatre will diversify its entertainment capabilities allowing live theatre; enhanced musical productions; and sophisticated live performances, all necessary in today’s competitive entertainment market.

The Cool Cities Program is part of Governor Jennifer M. Granholm’s economic plan to help revitalize Michigan’s cities by retaining and attracting the jobs and people critical to the emerging economies of the 21st century. The program is funded by redirecting existing resources in state government.

This year, sixteen projects have received the Cool Cities “Neighborhoods in Progress” designation and priority access to “tool box” items. Twelve of the 16 will also receive the catalyst grant of \$100,000. The 12 projects receiving the Cool Cities “Neighborhoods in Progress” and catalyst grant are located in Benton Harbor, Detroit (3), Flint, Grand Rapids, Howell, Ionia, Lansing, Mount Clemens, Muskegon, and Pontiac. The four projects that received the Cool Cities designation and priority access to state resources, without the \$100,000 catalyst funding are: Adrian, Cadillac, Dearborn and Saginaw.

“We had the funding available for 12 Neighborhoods in Progress, however we received 16 outstanding for proposals. As a result, we opted to add Adrian, Dearborn, Cadillac, and Saginaw projects as Cool Cities designees to assist their projects with the resources we have available including priority access and technical assistance,” said Department of Labor & Economic Growth Director Robert W. Swanson. “We’ve learned from past Cool Cities projects that just the designation alone gives them an opportunity to leverage significant investment into their communities.”



Department of Labor & Economic Growth director Robert W. Swanson (center) presents a sign designating the City of Ionia as a Cool Cities Neighborhoods in Progress.



Pictured left to right: Michael DeVos, Brenda Cowling-Cronk, Kevin Meade (back row) Julianne Burns, Jason Eppler, Mayor Dan Balice and Robert W. Swanson.